

Message Text

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TAGS: MARR, MPOL, MILI, TH

SUBJ: MP PRAYUNSAK CHALAYONDECHA REMARKS JULY 30 ON AIT

1. IN NEWS CONFERENCE JULY 30, DEMOCRAT (BANGKOK) M.P.
PRAYUNSAK CHALAYONDECHA MADE A REPORT TO NEWSMEN ON AIT AS
BEING AMMUNITION"THE TIME LIMIT OF WHICH HAS ALREADY EXPIRED",
THEN RESPONDED TO QUERIES FROM NEWSMEN.

2. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICAL USIS TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS
FROM M.P. PRAYUNSAK'S REMARKS.

BEGIN EXCERPTS

PRAYUNSAK: TODAY I HAVE AN IMPORTANT REPORT CONCERNING
NATIONAL SECURITY TO INFORM YOU OF. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT
THE AMMUNITION WHICH WE WILL BUY FROM AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES
FOR AS MUCH AS ABOUT 900 MILLION BAHT, AMMUNITION LEFT HERE BY
AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN, IS
AMMUNITION THE TIME LIMIT OF WHICH HAS ALREADY EXPIRED. I
CARRIED OUT INVESTIGATIONS AND FOUND THAT THE AMMUNITION IS
KEPT IN KORAT AND IT HAS BEEN TRANSPACKED (SIC) IN NEW CASES,
IN ORDER TO MAKE IT LOOK AS IF IT IS BRAND NEW. I CAN EVEN
INFORM YOU IN FULL DETAIL WHERE THAT AMMUNITION WAS REPACKED.

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PLEASE TAKE NOTES ON THIS INFORMATION. THE COMPANY WHICH

WAS IN CHARGE OF REPACKING THE AMMUNITION IS HERE IN BANGKOK AND ITS NAME IS THE REPUBLIC MOVING & STORAGE COMPANY. THIS COMPANY IS IN SUKHUMVIT ROAD, OPPOSITE THE CHOKECHAI BUILDING. THE MANAGER OF THE COMPANY IS MR. CHAI YA AMPHIKAPHORN. ITS TELEPHONE NUMBER IS NO. 3915768, AND YOU CAN EITHER GO AND CONTACT IT THERE, OR CONTACT IT BY TELEPHONE. THE AMMUNITION, HOWEVER, WAS REPACKED IN A FACTORY IN CHAN ROAD (TROK CHAN), THE CHI SENG FACTORY DEALING IN WOOD. IN THE REPACKING OF THE AMMUNITION, IT USED BRAND NEW PLYWOOD, THEN PRINTED A NEW DATE ON THE 9,000 PLYWOOD CASES. AFTER THIS WAS FINISHED, THOSE NEW CASES WERE TAKEN TO KORAT IN ORDER TO TURN THEM OVER TO OUR DEFENSE MINISTRY LATER. I OBTAINED THIS REPORT LAST NIGHT AND I TELEPHONED TO DEFENSE MINISTER THAWIT THIS MORNING, TO INFORM HIM OF IT, BUT I COULD NOT FIND HIM ANYWHERE. I THEREFORE INFORMED DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER SAMAK, BECAUSE HE AND I ARE M.P.S OF THE SAME DISTRICT HERE IN BANGKOK. I FEEL THAT THIS CONCERNS THE SECURITY OF OUR COUNTRY, BECAUSE IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE IF OUR SOLDIERS FIRED THEIR GUNS AND FOUND THAT THE AMMUNITION WAS DEAD, SHOULD THEY BE FIGHTING AGAINST AN ENEMY.

REPORTER: THIS REPORT WILL MAKE A MOST SENSATIONAL SPLASH*

PRAYUNSAK: IT CAN BE USED AS A BIG AND SENSATIONAL BANNER HEADLINE. I WANT TO PREVENT A TRAGEDY. EVEN SHOULD 900 MILLION BAHT BE WASTED, IT WOULD NOT MATTER MUCH. BUT WHAT A TRAGEDY IT WOULD BE IF THE LIVES OF OUR SOLDIERS WERE RISKED BECAUSE THEY WERE USING OUTDATED AMMUNITION.

REPORTER:

PRAYUNSAK: I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH AMMUNITION THERE IS. ONE CASE OF AMMUNITION COSTS 100,000 BATH SO 9,000 CASES COST 900 MILLION BAHT. THIS AMMUNITION WAS REPACKED IN ORDER TO THROW DUST INTO THE EYES OF OUR COMMITTEE INSPECTING AND TAKING OVER THE CASES OF AMMUNITION. THE REASON WHY THE AMMUNITION HAD TO BE REPACKED IS BECAUSE THE NORMAL PRACTICE IS FOR THE EXPIRY DATE OF THE AMMUNITION TO BE INSCRIBED ON THE CASE IN WHICH IT IS PACKED. BY REPACKING THE AMMUNITION, A COMPLETELY NEW DATE WAS INSCRIBED ON THE CASES. I APPEAL TO YOU TO HELP PREVENT US FROM BEING HOODWINKED THIS WAY. THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE MUST AT LEAST TAKE ACTION.

REPORTER: WHAT PROOF IS THERE?

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PRAYUNSAK: IT IS MORE THAN SUFFICIENT PROOF THAT THE AMMUNITION HAD TO BE REPACKED BECAUSE THE EXPIRY DATE HAD BEEN REACHED. THE ORIGINAL PACKING HAD THE EXPIRY DATE ON IT, OTHERWISE THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO NEED FOR THE AMMUNITION TO BE REPACKED.

REPORTER: WHAT ADVICE DO YOU THINK OUGHT TO BE GIVEN TO THE GOVERNMENT?

PRAYUNSAK: I HAVE ALREADY INFORMED DEPUTY INTERIOR

MINISTER SAMAK, BUT SHOULD I MEET DEFENSE MINISTER THAWIT
TODAY I WILL REPORT THE MATTER TO HIM, SO THAT HE CAN TAKE
AUITABLE ACTION.

REPORTER: HAS THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY APPROVED THE
900 MILLION BAHT ALLOCATION REQUIRED FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE
AMMUNITION?

PRAYUNSAK: THAT IS A "FRIENDSHIP" PRICE THE U.S. IS
SELLING THAT AMMUNITION TO US.

REPORTER: HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

PRAYUNSAK: FROM MY PERSONAL INVESTIGATIONS. I HAVE
MANY FRIENDS AND THEY TOLD ME ABOUT IT, BECAUSE THEY FEEL
GREAT CONCERN REGARDING THIS AMMUNITION. I WILL CLOSELY
FOLLOW UP THE MATTER AND I WELL KEEP MASS MEDIA INFORMED OF
ANY FURTHER NEWS.

END TEXT.

WHITEHOUSE

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